

**(Washington, DC)** Today, Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-Miramar) expressed sadness upon learning of the death of Katherine C. Kelly, who died this morning at the age of 86. Katherine was a lifelong champion of human rights and universal health care.

“I would like to take this opportunity to honor the life of a great American, Mrs. Katherine C. Kelly,” said Hastings. “Katherine was a good friend and supporter for more than 40 years.”

Katherine was born on June 20, 1924 in New Rochelle, New York and grew up in South Orange, New Jersey where she graduated from Miss Beard’s School in 1942 before going on to graduate from Wellesley College in 1946. She went on to be the founding member of the Society of Women Engineers in addition to the International Fishing Association. Additionally, in the 1980s, Katherine helped to lead Americans for Democratic Action.

Over the course of her life, she and her late husband, Edward M. Kelly, were prominently active in the Civil Rights movement, the fight for women’s rights, gay rights, and other progressive movements in the United States. Katherine dedicated her life to the Democratic Party, serving as State Committeewoman from Palm Beach County for 26 years. Additionally, she was named to the Electoral College and served as a delegate to five Democratic National Conventions.

Katherine also served as the Legislative Director for Florida NOW, as Vice President of the Florida Women’s Political Caucus, as a Board member for NARAL, and as Development Director of Women Leaders Online. Her continued dedication to political and progressive causes led to recognition as the Outstanding Feminist 2001 by Florida NOW and Woman of the Year in 2008 by the Democratic Women’s Club Palm Beach County.

“Katherine was deeply loved and widely respected by everyone who knew her,” further noted Hastings. “Today, our nation has lost someone who represented all that is good in the world.”

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